Review
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tempt to illuminate the interior struggle and transcendent humanistic vision that produced this warrior for democracy.

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BRUCE MICHELSON, *Printer's Devil: Mark Twain and the American Publishing Revolution.* Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2006. Pp. xiv + 299. $34.95.

Like Benjamin Franklin's career as a printer, which played an essential role in his successes as a politician, scientist, and author, so too did Mark Twain's intimate knowledge of print culture become the experiential and conceptual foundation for his books. In fascinating and learned detail, Bruce Michelson's *Printer's Devil: Mark Twain and the American Publishing Revolution* tells the story of Twain's journey from youthful printer to publishing-company owner to typesetter investor to subscription-trade entrepreneur to would-be illustrator. While having his hands in virtually every aspect of the printing, advertising, and selling of his books, Twain was also, of course, their author. In chapters ranging from an analysis of Twain's newspaper articles to an account of the print shop in *The Mysterious Stranger, #44*, Michelson convincingly explains how Twain's identity as author was both produced and compromised in many cases by these other roles. But Michelson does much more than that. He argues that Twain's oftentimes disrupted narratives need to be read as articulations of Twain's attempted liberation from the stifling requirements of print culture, that the publishing industry itself gets figured in the novels as a site where bourgeois values are both disseminated and potentially subverted, and lastly that Twain's self-conscious and self-inflicted metamorphosis into a commodity anticipates contemporary ideas about the death of the author (by Michel Foucault), the significance of the simulacra (by Jean Baudrillard), and the media production of celebrity (by Guy Debord). What is most impressive about Michelson's achievement is his ability to tell synchronically two very different and complicated stories, and to have them speak to one another: the first is a macro-narrative about the revolution of publishing in the nineteenth century, and the second is a micro-narrative, with persuasive close readings, about Twain's writings.

The first two chapters of *Printer's Devil* display Michelson's broad knowledge of the early years in American publishing history. Read-

ers are treated not only to a biographical account of Twain's acquisition of knowledge about publishing and his brother Orion's failed attempts to run a profitable newspaper in Missouri, but also to an array of crucial information about how newspapers were printed, circulated, and sold. One of the reasons that Orion's *Daily Journal* failed was that although postal rates had been cut, enabling magazines like *Harper's* to slash prices, Orion had to maintain his higher prices (he did not have the updated machinery of the big New York and Boston companies) and therefore was unable to compete with the bigger publishing houses. Michelson does a fine job explaining the great difficulties facing local presses in relatively out-of-the-way places like Hannibal. The first chapter also organizes and explains the most important changes in publishing into five clear categories, ranging from the manufacture of cheaper paper to the expansion of telegraph lines to the rising importance of illustrations, the last of which will become a critical theme in Michelson's readings of Twain's writings.

The second chapter on the printing revolution foregrounds Twain's increasing focus on the "cultural and cognitive absurdities of the trade he was learning and the national industry in which he participated" (p. 52). The centerpiece is a wonderful close reading of "An Encounter with an Interviewer" (1874), reminiscent of Bob Dylan's famous "interviews" in the 1960s when he, like Twain, "usurp[ed] the ritual and perform[ed] it backwards" (p. 59). Michelson delineates Twain's burgeoning awareness of the ridiculous notion among readers that just because something is printed it is true, and the humorous possibilities that come with that recognition. But there are further, more existential realizations coming to the fore. The idea that the person speaking or writing is not necessarily who he or she pretends to be in print is an obvious point, but the idea that the person speaking or writing, like the reader, does not know who he or she really is is a far more complicated possibility. Michelson stresses this point in the early years of Twain's career in order then to demonstrate how this topic will become quite important and personal to Twain, especially as his experience of authorship becomes more corporatized.

A Tramp Abroad (1880) is the primary work in the next chapter, and it is a key text because of Twain's developing interest in the question of visuality. The novel (if one can even call it that) thematically takes up the issue of seeing, and how, in the late nineteenth century, one sees the beauties of Europe through the eyes of others who have taken the European tour and have published their views of it. Michelson reads Twain's representations of seeing as a subversion of these printed views, often by upper-class, snooty authors, and interprets the

images in *A Tramp Abroad* as "ridicul[ing] and subvert[ing] modern rituals of looking, [and] the commodification of seeing" (p. 78). Twain's haphazard approach to securing images, photographs, and drawings reflects a kind of "verbal-textual anarchy" (p. 84) toward which the work is veering in its search for some kind of original utterance. This anarchy, moreover, finds expression in passages that are utterly out of context. It is through this kind of bricolage that Twain establishes what Michelson calls, in a lovely turn-of-phrase, a "defiant meander" (p. 109). *A Tramp Abroad* incorporates and disarms the threats to its originality both by plagiarizing sections of others' travel narratives and by using illustrations not to authenticate the verbal experience, but to call attention to the gap between the original and the copy.

Michelson's reading of *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* takes quite literally Huck's claim, "if I'd a knowed what a trouble it was to make a book," and puts that statement in the context of the illustrations made by principal artist E. W. Kemble for the first edition. One of the primary claims in this chapter is that the impossible-to-sort-out relation between Huck's voice and Twain's is usefully analyzed by studying the tension between the verbal quality of the novel and its visual apparatus. By calling attention to the bookishness of the illustrations, in contrast to the oral dimension of Huck's voice, Michelson maintains that the novel is located in two different moments in the history of publishing. That phrase "forty or fifty years ago," with which the temporality of the novel is ambiguously designated, registers the gap between Huck's (and Twain's youthful) world of local knowledge and Twain's adult location in the competitive and national sphere of late-nineteenth-century U.S. publication. Again, Michelson bolsters his argument about the novel's representation of print culture by analyzing how Tom's historical (mis)information is a function of the growing dissemination of history books, and how the Duke and the King's advertisements eerily echo Twain's own print advertisements of *Huckleberry Finn*.

Michelson argues that Twain's writings, beginning with *A Tramp Abroad*, register a sense of his diminishing control over his own book production; that his position as author is starting to be attacked by the very print culture that produced him as an author: "Huck's voice and story . . . resist the encroachment of the typographic" (p. 162). The threat of type is clearly visible in *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*, the work with which the final chapter of *Printer's Devil* begins. The contest between Twain's verbal production and the visual components of this novel, as well as a similar push-and-pull in *Pudd'nhead Wilson* and *King Leopold's Soliloquy*, is the subject of Michelson's analysis.

Keeping in mind the financial pressures that Twain was under, due to the enormous burdens of the Paige Typesetter and the *Library of American Literature* project that he was supporting, Michelson argues that Twain's books were written with as much concern, if not more, for the visual as for the verbal. He writes about "the invasion of the verbal text by these illustrations" (p. 181), and in the case of *Pudd'nhead Wilson* includes an image of Roxy looking more like a slave owner than a slave that clearly does present an "egregious conflict between picture and verbal text" (p. 185). The chapter concludes with an interesting reading of the photographs in *King Leopold's Soliloquy* that, according to Michelson, undercut Twain's verbal intervention vis à vis colonial abuses in the Congo.

Printer's Devil is a very satisfying account of Twain's career in relation to and as a direct outgrowth of the U.S. publishing revolution. Because Michelson's argument about the tensions between the visual and verbal are so important, I would have liked to have seen more illustrations, especially in the *Tramp Abroad* chapter, where there are none. Perhaps this is a matter of keeping book costs down. Further, the analysis of the visual and verbal contest in the novels, in which "the continued relevance of the author" (p. 202) is called into question, leads Michelson to deploy a familiar narrative about Twain's eventual descent into despair, a narrative that *Printer's Devil* elsewhere wishes to challenge, especially in its reading of the "euphoria" (p. 217) of duplication in *The Mysterious Stranger, #44*. I also found the absence of any discussion of race, especially in the *Huckleberry Finn* chapter, somewhat strange, as if the argument about the novel and publishing history made questions of race beside the point. It would have been powerful if Michelson could have combined the two. That said, *Printer's Devil* is immensely illuminating and necessary for an understanding of Mark Twain and U.S. print culture.

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Lise Shapiro Sanders, *Consuming Fantasies: Labor, Leisure, and the London Shopgirl, 1880–1920*. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2006. Pp. xii + 279. $44.95 cloth; $9.95 cd-rom.

These are heady days for scholars of the cultural history of women in turn-of-the-century London. Lise Shapiro